

October 21, 2002

Ms. Mary Alice George  
Tehama County Clerk/Recorder  
PO Box 250  
Red Bluff CA, 96080

Dear Ms. George:

Enclosed is a Notice of Exemption for the Deer Creek Water Exchange Pilot Program-Production Well Installation Project

The project involves the installation of a groundwater production well by the Deer Creek Irrigation District in cooperation with the California Department of Water Resources and the California Department of Fish and Game. This well is part of a pilot project to test the effectiveness of providing increased flow in Deer Creek, by allowing groundwater to be used in-lieu of bypassed surface water. Additional flows within Deer Creek will aide in the recovery of State and federally listed species including Chinook salmon and steelhead.

If you have any questions or need additional information, you may contact me at (530) 839-2365.

Sincerely,

John Edson, President  
Deer Creek Irrigation District

Enclosure

October 21, 2002

Office of Planning and Research  
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121  
Post Office Box 3044  
Sacramento, California 95812-3044

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Enclosure

## **NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

**To:** Office of Planning and Research  
1400 Tenth Street, Room 121  
Post Office Box 3044  
Sacramento, California 95812-3044

Ms. Mary Alice George  
Tehama County Clerk/Recorder  
PO Box 250  
Red Bluff CA, 96080

**From:** Deer Creek Irrigation District

**Project Title:** Deer Creek Water Exchange Pilot Program-Production Well Installation Project

**Project Location:** Tehama County (see attached figures 1 and 2)

**Project Location:** Specific locations include;  
Pete Wells Site - T 24N, R 1W, Section 4, NW 1/4 of SW 1/4

### **Description of Nature, Purpose, and Beneficiaries of Project:**

The proposed project will involve the drilling of one 900-foot deep test-production well. The production well will be drilled using a large truck-mounted reverse rotary drilling rig equipped with a mud pump, pipe rack, and drilling fluid holding tank/shaker system. Drilling, construction and testing will occur during October and November. Installation of pump, motor, and electric power would occur during November, December and January. Well drilling would occur 24 hours a day, seven days per week. Additional support vehicles including a water tender, front-end loader, pipe truck, and pickup trucks will be parked on-site. The drilling rig and associated equipment will occupy an area of approximately 100 feet by 100 feet. Access for these vehicles will be directly off the adjacent paved and gravel roads. No improvements for site access will be required. Drill cuttings and inert bentonite clay, produced during drilling operations, will be spread over the site upon well completion. The surface completion will consist of an 8 by 10 feet concrete pad, pump-house enclosure and 16 inch discharge pipe. The discharge pipe will be routed underground from the drill site on the east side of Reed Orchard Road to the Deer Creek Irrigation District ditch located along the west side of Reed Orchard Road.

Potential site impacts include minor disturbance of the ground surface within and adjacent to the drill location and a temporary increase in noise levels during drilling and installation of the well. The closest residence is located approximately 2000 feet away. A network of groundwater monitoring wells has been established to detect any groundwater impacts associated with well pumping.

The proposed drilling location is in an area of annual grassland on private property. The physical topography is flat (i.e. <2 percent slope). Field surveys for State and federally "listed" plant and animal species, jurisdictional wetlands, and archaeological resources were completed at the proposed drill location, with no unavoidable adverse impacts identified. No vernal pools occur at or near the proposed drill location. No mature trees will be removed. A small wetland occurs in the corner of the field to the north of the proposed location. However, a raised roadbed through the field occurs between the project area and the wetland. This and additional best management practices will prevent accidental spilling and/or runoff of fluids into the existing wetland.

The primary purpose of the project is to test the effectiveness and feasibility of groundwater exchange within the Deer Creek Irrigation District. Additional goals of the proposed project include collection of basic data on groundwater level fluctuations, monitoring changes in groundwater quality, and geologic exploration. Project beneficiaries include Deer Creek Irrigation District, Tehama County, California Department of Water Resources, California Department of Fish and Game, public trust resources including Chinook salmon and steelhead.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Deer Creek Irrigation District

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Deer Creek Irrigation District

**Exempt Status:** Categorical exemption for basic data collection (Section 15306). Categorical exemption for minor alteration of land (Section 15304), Categorical exemption for new construction of limited small new facilities (Section 15303).

**Reasons Why the Project Is Exempt:**

- Section 15306 - basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities, which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource.
- Categorical exemption for new construction of limited small new facilities; installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures; and conversion of the use of small existing structures (Section 15303). This categorical exemption applies to the construction or conversion and location of limited numbers of new small facilities or structures.

- Categorical exemption for minor alteration in the condition of land, such as grading, gardening, and landscaping (Section 15304). Section 15304 applies to minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, or vegetation that do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry or agricultural purposes. This exemption includes grading on land with a slope of less than ten percent.

**Contact Person:** John Edson, President  
Deer Creek Irrigation District

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received for Filing at OPR \_\_\_\_\_



Figure 1. Project Location Map



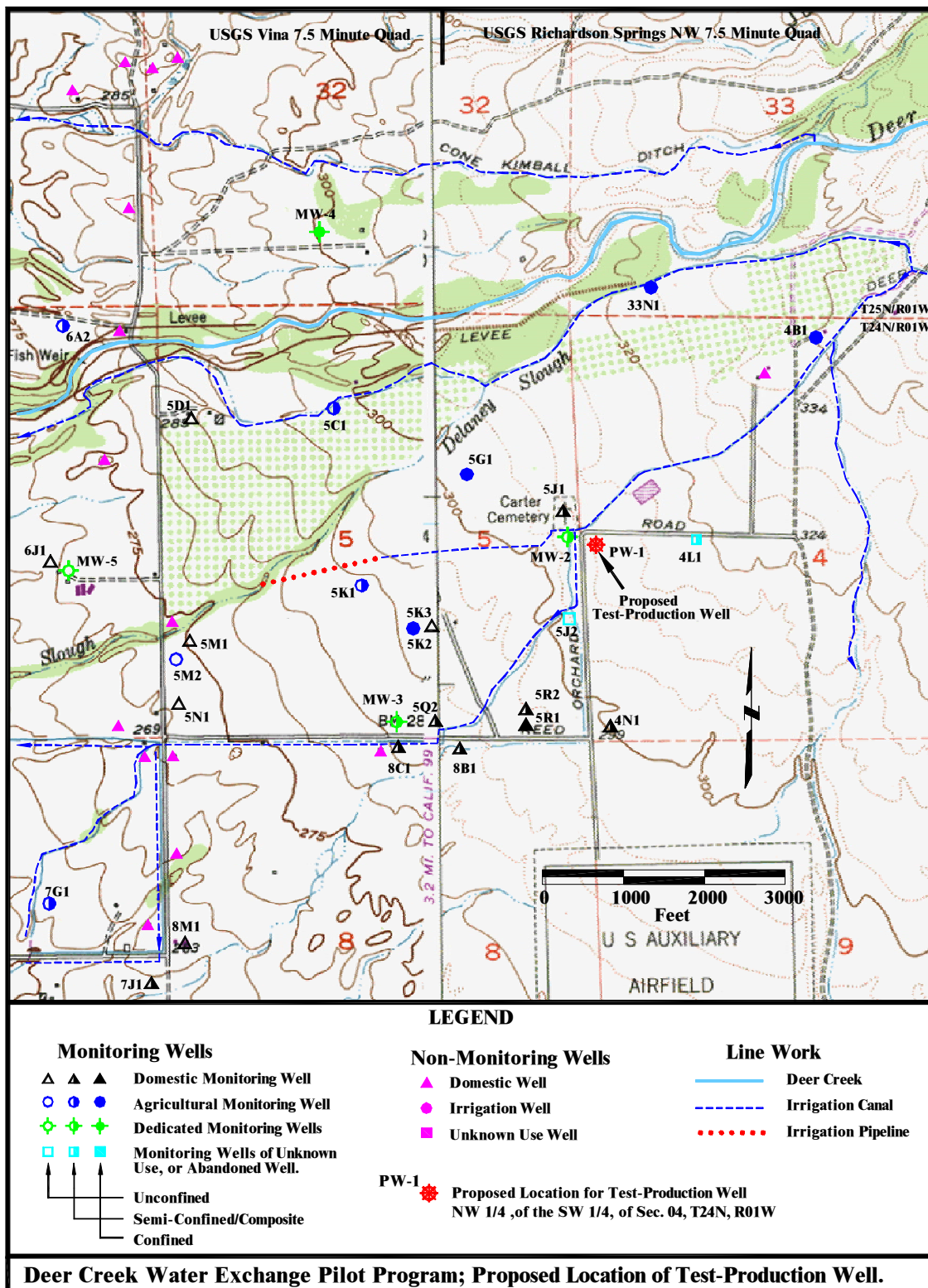


Figure 2. Test-Production Well Site Location Map